

## LISTING OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-33 (canceled)

34. (currently amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 33,~~ A polishing apparatus comprising:

a polishing platen;

a polishing pad overlying the polishing platen, the polishing pad having a central region and a peripheral region, the central region having a first front surface and the peripheral region having a second front surface', wherein at least a portion of the second front surface lies below the first front surface; and

a carrier overlying the polishing pad, wherein the polishing platen is further characterized as having a tapered region, and wherein the peripheral region of the polishing pad overlies the tapered region.

35. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim ~~22~~ 34, wherein the peripheral region comprises a horizontal region.

36. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim ~~22~~ 34, wherein the peripheral region comprises a tapered region.

37. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim ~~22~~ 34, wherein the peripheral region comprises a grooved region.

38. (original) The apparatus, of claim 37, wherein the grooved region is further characterized as being U-shaped.

b1 39. (original) The apparatus of claim 37, wherein the grooved region is further characterized as being V shaped.

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